

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LEGISLATIVE AUTONOMY ACT

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Legislative Autonomy Act, which would eliminate the wasteful congressional review period for legislation passed by the District of Columbia Council and align longtime congressional practice with the law. The congressional review period for D.C. bills is almost entirely ignored by Congress, providing it no benefit, but imposes substantial costs (in time and money) on the District. Congress has almost always used the appropriations process, rather than the disapproval process, to block or nullify D.C. bills and almost entirely abandoned the disapproval process as its mechanism for nullifying D.C. bills 24 years ago, having used it successfully only three times before then. Yet Congress still requires the D.C. Council to use Kafkaesque make-work procedures to comply with the abandoned congressional review period established by the D.C. Home Rule Act.

Our bill would eliminate the congressional review period for bills passed by the D.C. Council. However, Congress would lose no authority it currently exercises because, even upon enactment of this bill, Congress would retain its authority under Clause 17 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution to amend or overturn any D.C. laws at any time.

The congressional review period (30 days for civil bills and 60 days for criminal bills) includes those days when either house of Congress is in session, delaying D.C. bills from becoming law, often for many months. The delay forces the D.C. Council to pass most bills several times, using a cumbersome and complicated process to ensure that the operations of this large and rapidly changing city continue uninterrupted, avoiding a lapse of a bill before it becomes final. The congressional calendar means that a 30-day period usually lasts a couple of months and often much longer because of congressional recesses. For example, the congressional review period for a bill that changed the word "handicap" to "disability" lasted nine months. The Council estimates that 50 to 65 percent of the bills it passes could be eliminated if the review period did not exist. To ensure that a bill does not lapse, the Council often must pass the same bill in three forms: emergency (in effect for 90 days), temporary (in effect for 225 days) and permanent. Moreover, the Council has to carefully track the days the House and Senate are in session for each D.C. bill it passes to avoid gaps and to determine when the bills have taken effect. The Council estimates that it could save 5,000 employee hours and 160,000 sheets of paper per two-year Council period if the review process were eliminated. House Minority Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY ad-

ressed the issue of saving such resources by eliminating the amount of paperwork sent to Congress when he proposed a cut in the number of reports that federal agencies are required to submit to Congress. Our bill is a perfect candidate because it eliminates a paperwork process that repeats itself without interruption.

My bill would do no more than align the Home Rule Act with congressional practice over the last 24 years. Of the more than 5,000 legislative acts transmitted to Congress since the Home Rule Act was passed in 1973, only three resolutions disapproving D.C. bills have been enacted (in 1979, 1981 and 1991) and two of those mistakenly involved federal interests—one in the Height Act and the other in the location of chanceries. Placing a congressional hold on more than 5,000 D.C. bills has not only proven unnecessary, but has imposed costs on the D.C. government, residents and businesses. District residents and businesses are also placed on hold because they have no certainty when D.C. bills, from taxes to regulations, will take effect, making it difficult to plan. It is particularly unfair to require the D.C. Council to engage in this unnecessary, labor-intensive and costly process to no effect. My bill would only eliminate the automatic hold placed on D.C. bills and the need for the D.C. Council to comply with a process initially created for the convenience of Congress, but that is now almost never used. This bill would promote efficiency and cost savings for Congress, the District and D.C. residents and businesses without reducing congressional oversight, and would carry out the policy stressed by Congress of eliminating needless paperwork and make-work redundancy.

I urge my colleagues to support this good-government measure.

### INTRODUCTION OF THE PLACE ACT

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Preparing Localities for an Autonomous and Connected Environment (PLACE) Act. This legislation passed the House last session as Section 5303 of the Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2, 116th Cong.) and creates a federally funded highly automated vehicle clearinghouse to study the secondary impacts of autonomous vehicles and mobility innovation.

The transportation sector is changing at a faster pace than ever before. New mobility options like Uber and Lyft, bikeshare, and scooters have already disrupted how Americans get around. The private sector has invested more than \$16 billion toward bringing semi- or fully-autonomous vehicles to market, and research publications on self-driving technology have quadrupled over the past three years. Many

predict autonomous vehicles will become widely available within just a few years.

Done right, autonomous vehicles can solve some of the country's most vexing transportation problems while improving mobility for all. Done wrong, autonomous vehicles can exacerbate transportation's negative externalities, leaving communities struggling to make sense of an everchanging landscape. The PLACE Act will ensure that autonomous vehicles improve the livability of communities, allowing policymakers to understand their influence on land use, urban design, transportation, real estate, accessibility, municipal budgets, social equity, availability and quality of jobs, air quality and climate, energy consumption, and the environment. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this issue as part of a long-term surface transportation reauthorization package.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. DAVID J. TRONE**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. TRONE. Madam Speaker, I was not present in the House chamber for Roll Call vote no. 11. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY.

### INTRODUCTION OF THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES PROTECTION ACT

**HON. ED CASE**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 21, 2021*

Mr. CASE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join my colleague, Representative KAHELE, in introducing our bill to protect one of the most unique and fragile environments on Earth, our Hawaii, from devastating invasive species.

Invasive species pose an especially grave threat to Hawaii's unique ecosystems, natural resources and agricultural communities, in part due to Hawaii's unique geography. Hawaii is the most isolated island chain and one of the most ecologically diverse places in the world. We are 2,282 miles from the Continental United States, 2,952 miles from Japan and 4,772 miles from Washington, DC, with no other islands in close proximity. We have within our constrained borders ten of the thirteen world climate zones, with ecosystems ranging from desert to tropical, where plants and animals that found their way to Hawaii evolved like nowhere else. A 2014 survey identified fully 9,975 endemic species in Hawaii. These species include the Hawaiian scarlet honeycreeper, the 'i'iwi, the flowering evergreen; and the state mammal of Hawaii, the 'lioholoikauaua (Hawaiian monk seal).

However, tragically, in large part due to invasive species, Hawaii has become the endangered species and extinction capital of the

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